TURKISH CALLIGRAPHY

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TURKISH CALLIGRAPHY

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Photographs : Hadiye Cangökçe- Cem Çetin
Printed by : Model Matbaa A.Ş. Tel: 518 35 60
Publisher : N. Refioğlu Publications
Tel: 225 86 91 Fax: 225 72 09

ISBN 975-96278-0-9

FRONT COVER:
AN ALBUM PAGE WITH A CALLIGRAPHY
IN *THULUTH- NASKHI* SCRIPTS
Abdallah Kırımi
Second half of 16th century, 26.5 x 20.2 cm.
Topkapı Palace Museum, H.2291/83

WHAT IS CALLIGRAPHY?

In Islamic sources the art of calligraphy is defined as "*spiritual pattern formed by wordly tools*". True to this definition, the art of calligraphy created with a reed pen and soot ink has continued its development through the centuries. In the system of Islamic calligraphy most letters change in form according to whether they are at the beginning, middle or end of the word. The fact that each letter can be written in many different forms created a wealth of variety and made it possible to develop endless patterns in writing.

For Islamic calligraphy, pens made from the reeds growing in swamps on river banks and lakes are used. The raw reeds, after having being cut, mature in manure so that they lose their dampness and become hard. When dry, the reeds take on a brown or black colour, according to which kind of reed they are. The tips of these reeds are cut and sharpened with a knife on a bone or ivory pen rest called a *makta* , 2-3 cm. in width and 10-20 cm. in length. Then they are ready for use. However, for fine writing such as *naskhi* and for long texts like the Qur'an, the hard, black thin branches of a tree that grows in Java are used most often. The Java pen is made of the branches of this tropical tree because these are stronger and the points do not wear out easily.

The *kargı*-pen (pike-pen) made of hard bamboo reeds is used for writing broader and larger letters. For very large letters when even the *kargı*-pen is insufficient, pens made of wood, cut in size according to wish and called tree or wood pens, have been produced. The shapes of pens change in accordance with the different styles of calligraphy. For example the *ta'liq* pen has a more curved point than the *thuluth* pen. The *naskhi* pen is less curved and the *rıqa* pen is almost straight. The pens are sometimes kept in long boxes called *divit* (pen-cases) with ink-wells on their sides, sometimes in cylinder or trunk-shaped boxes called *kalemdan.* The cylinder-shaped *kalemdan* is also known as *kubur.*

Calligraphers have written their works using soot ink. In addition to this black ink, specially prepared gold and coloured inks have also been used. There is also a special tool with strung threads called a *mıstar* , which is used to ensure that the letters in the lines are straight.

THE BIRTH OF ISLAMIC CALLIGRAPHY

From the mid-8th century onwards, the Arabic alphabet, which all the tribes that converted to the Islamic faith started using, slowly took on a more and more aesthetic appearance. During this era, when the Turks also became Muslim and a part of the Islamic world, Islamic calligraphy became an art reflecting beauty and skill more than anything else. This was thanks to the efforts of the calligraphers who were trying to achieve perfection.

The *Qur'an*, the first book of the Islamic faith, was initially written on gazelle skin (parchment) in black ink and thus was the first example of beautiful calligraphy. This first *Qur'an* text was written without letter-pointing and diacritical marks. Two different styles were created from this first written book. The first style, with definite corners and the closest to pictorial design, was used mainly in the writing of the *Qur'an* and took the name *kufic* from the city of Qufa, an early Islamic centre. Characterized by its horizontal and vertical lines, the *kufic* script showed regional peculiarities in the 9th century, the *kufic* script of Iran differed from the *kufic* of the Baghdad region and of North Africa. The scripts used in Baghdad and North Africa were more dynamic and of slighter dimensions. The *kufic* script had its golden years in *Qur'an* writing in the 10th and 11th centuries, particularly in Andalusia and the Maghrib, and took on a different appearance under the name of *maghribi* script. Large *kufic* letters were also widely employed in the decoration of monumental buildings.

The second style was usually used in daily texts due to the fact that it was easier and faster to write; because of its rounded letters it was also more suitable for artistic texts, which flourished in Damascus during the Umayyad era (661-750). In the 8th century new scripts were born from this cursive style of calligraphy, using reed pens with different sized points. The first style known from among these was *jalil*, used for writing texts with large script and the standard large-sized *tumar* used for writing formal state texts. Two different sized-*qalams* , one two thirds the size of a *tumar qalam* and the other one-third the size, created the scripts *thuluthayn* and *thuluth.* During the Abbasid period (750-1258) with the rise of interest in science and art, the need for more books

1- PAGE FROM A *QUR'AN*

WRITTEN ON PARCHMENT IN *KUFIC* SCRIPT

7th century, 46 x 40 cm.

Topkapı Palace Museum, H.S.32

This Qur'an was being read by the third Caliph Uthman, at the time of his assasination.

2

2- PAGE FROM A *QUR'AN*

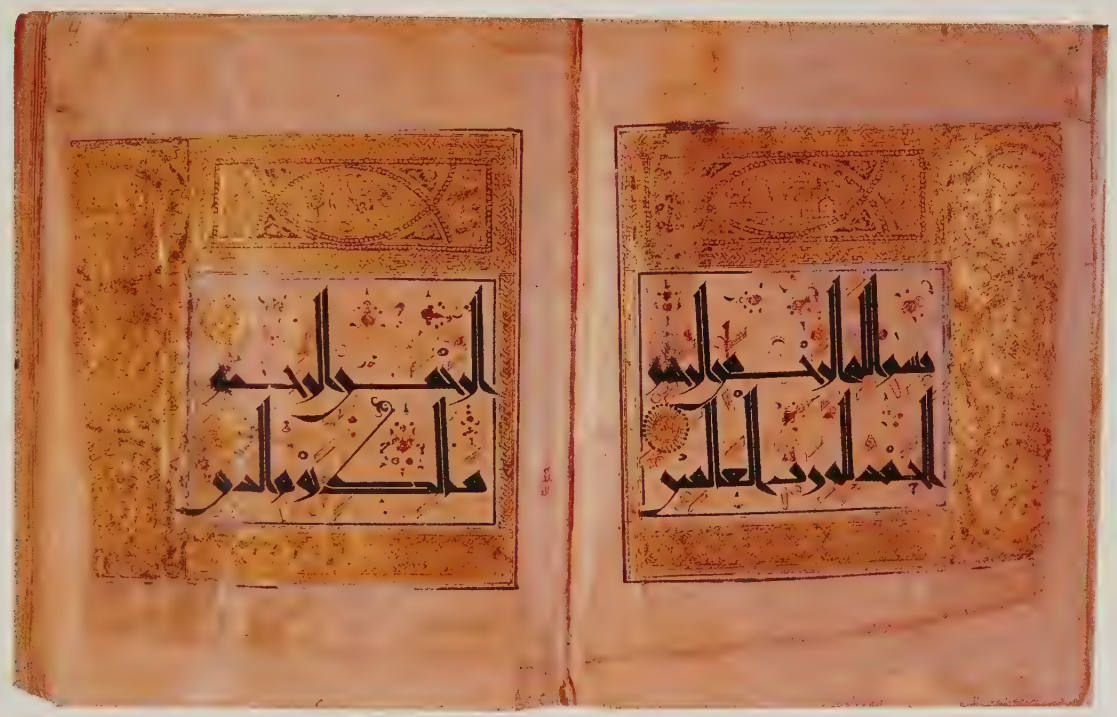
WRITTEN ON PARCHMENT IN *MAGHRIBI* SCRIPT

In Ceuta by the scribe Muhammed b. Muhammed b. 'Ali b. Şu'ayb al-Ansari

Dated 1191, 31.5 x 26.2 cm.

Topkapı Palace Museum, R. 27

3



3- PAGES FROM A *QUR'AN*

WRITTEN ON PAPER IN EASTERN *KUFIC* SCRIPT

Seljuk, by the scribe Abu Bakr Ahmad b. 'Abd Allah al-Gaznavi

Dated 1177, 25 x 18 cm.

Topkapı Palace Museum, E.H.42, f.3b-4a

arose, especially in Baghdad, and this brought an increase in the number of calligraphers. A calligrapher named Ibn al-Muqla (?-940) managed to lay down rules for the harmony and order of the art of calligraphy. The *naskhi* script was characterized by the ratio of each letter to the length of the letter *alif*. The *muhaqqaq*, *rayhani* and *naskhi* scripts were developed in the time of Ibn al-Bawwab (?-1022). Ibn al-Khazin (?-1124) gave form to the *tawqi* and *rıqa* scripts. However in the 13th century Yaqut al-Mustasımı (?-1298), who was a Turk from Amasya living in Baghdad, defined and applied six different scripts: *thuluth*, *naskhi*, *muhaqqaq*, *rayhani*, *tawqi* and *rıqa*, jointly called *aqlam al-sittah* or *shish qalam* , in a most excellent way. Yaqut also sharpened the point of the reed pen into a curve, whereas hitherto it had been straight, and with this innovation gave a special grace to examples of calligraphy. After his death, his students Abd Allah al-Sayrafi (*naskhi*), Yahya l-Jamali l-Sufi (*thuluth*), Abd Allah Arghun (*muhaqqaq*), Mubarak Shah al-Suyufi (*rayhani*), Mubarak Shah al-Qutb (*tawqi*) and Ahmad al- Suhrawardi (*rıqa*) became masters in these scripts and spread *aqlam al-sittah* from Baghdad to Anatolia, Egypt, Syria, Iran and Transoxiana.

AQLAM AL-SITTAH
(The Six Styles of Cursive Writing)

The six scripts have generally been taken up in Turkish calligraphy in groups of two: *thuluth-naskhi*; *muhaqqaq-rayhani*; *tawqi-rıqa*. The first scripts in each group (*thuluth, muhaqqaq, tawqi*) were written with a wide-pointed pen (about 2 mm.) while the latter scripts (*naskhi, rayhani, rıqa*) were written with a pen with a narrower point (about 1 mm.). The characteristics of *muhaqqaq* are close to those of *rayhani*, while *tawqi* and *rıqa* are like two brothers, elder and younger. However *thuluth* and *naskhi* are not similar to each other. The most delicate and minute shape of *naskhi*, resembling particles of dust, is called the *ghubar* script. *Thuluth*, which is defined as the mother of calligraphy in ancient sources, is the script most suitable for artistic calligraphy from the six styles of cursive writing. The round and cursive letters give the artist scope for a rich variety of patterns and compositions. This is more apparent in inscriptions on monuments in the *jali thuluth* lettering, for which very wide-pointed pens are used

or the script enlarged by squaring, so that the calligraphy can be seen from afar. *Jali* means "*large, noticeable*". The calligraphy style in which the words and letter groups of the *thuluth* and *jali thuluth* are written without separation, is named *muthalthal*. The art of mirror writing, in which the unit on the left reflects the unit on the right, is called *muthanna* or *aynalı*.

The *naskhi* script, mostly applied with a very slim pointed pen and in spite of its letters being rounded, is always in harmony with the line and not suitable for stylization. Therefore it was mostly used for *Qur'an* writing.

Muhaqqaq and *rayhani,* which are to be seen as brothers, are also in harmony with the line arrangement, so that *muhaqqaq* was applied for writing large-sized *Qur'ans* and *rayhani* for small-sized *Qur'ans* until the 16th century. *Tawqi* and *rıqa* scripts were used in the early Ottoman period for formal correspondence and, rarely, for producing copies of books. In Iran in the 14th century the *tawqi* script went through a change and became a new script called *ta'liq*. A different style was developed later, which made *ta'liq* go out of fashion, called *naskh ı ta'liq* or *nasta'liq*. This script reached Istanbul in the 15th century under the name of *ta'liq*. The *ta'liq* script with its slim, delicate and curved style was mostly used in the writing of literary works. It was also the script of *fatwas* (opinions on legal matters, furnished by *muftis* [official expounders of Muhammedan law] on application). Its *jali* shape also started to be used for inscriptions on Ottoman monuments in addition to the *jali thuluth* script. The natural sized *ta'liq*, written with pens having a point of 2 mm. in width, was mostly suitable to prepare calligraphies on album pages.

Ta'liq script which was developed independently from the *aqlam al-sittah* was used in Iran in formal correspondence. When it arrived in Istanbul during the period of Sultan Mehmed II (1451-1481), it changed its form swiftly and, being the script used for formal correspondence of the Ottoman Imperial Council (*Diwan-ı Humayun*), took on the name *divani*. In the beginning it was cursive and superstructured with its letters undotted and unconventionally joined together, and had no diacritical marks. In the 16th century its large form, known as *divani jali,* was developed in ornamental variety and mostly used for very formal state correspondence.

يهدي من يشاء الى صراط
مستقيم وكذلك
جعلناكم امة وسطا

4- PAGE FROM A *QUR'AN*
WRITTEN IN *THULUTH* SCRIPT
Yaqut al-Mustasımi, dated 1282-83
Illuminated in the 16th century, 33.5 x 22.7 cm.
Topkapı Palace Museum, E.H.227, f.2a

سبلنا وإن الله لمع المحسنين
بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

5- PAGE FROM A *QUR'AN* SECTION
WRITTEN IN *MUHAQQAQ-THULUTH* SCRIPTS
Ilhanid, 14th century, 73 x 50 cm.
Ordered by Sultan Oljaytu Hudabanda Muhammad (1304-1316
Topkapı Palace Museum, E.H.234,f.10a

THE APPLICATION OF ISLAMIC CALLIGRAPHY

Islamic calligraphers concentrated mainly on manuscripts. Among these *Qur'ans* had a very special place and were usually written by the Ottomans in *naskhi* script.

Calligraphies using single or twin scripts:*thutuh-naskhi*, *muhaqqaq-rayhani*; or *tawqi-rıqa* of the *aqlam al-sittah* , prepared as album pages as well as panels, were among the private works of Turkish calligraphers. These album pages, after being stuck on cardboard in a special way, and then illuminated, were joined to each other with strips and bound together. In this way calligraphy albums (*murakka*) were made. Such album pages might also include calligraphic exercises by the artists which were performed to avoid losing their dexterity.

The calligraphers also used to prepare large panels containing a proverb or a *Qur'anic* verse which were hung on walls as decoration. The aim of these was to encourage virtue through art. This type of calligraphic panel reached its peak in the 19th century. Among them were also those with a unique standard page layout which had a special value and were called *Hilye*. Arabic texts devoted to the physical appearance, personality and behaviour of the Prophet Muhammed are known as *Hilye-i Saadet* or *Hilye*.

This type of text was first written in a large size with a carefully designed layout by Hafız Uthman at the end of the 17th century. From the time of Hafız Uthman on, many calligraphers wrote the *Basmalah* ("*In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful*") and the *Hilye* in accordance with the standard layout. The *Hilye* could be in various sizes, from that of a small book to a wall hanging of over two metres. At the bottom of some of them, it is recorded that the master calligrapher acknowledged this calligrapher's skill and awarded him the certificate of mastership (*İcazet*).

Calligraphers have also done many inscriptions for mosques. Among them are inscriptions giving the construction date of the building, band inscriptions which encircle the tambour of the dome or fill the inside of the dome, inscriptions placed above the windows or hung on the walls, etc. Besides the mosques, all important buildings were decorated with inscriptions by master

calligraphers, some carved on marble, some written with gold on a dark background. Inscriptions on tiles were very popular until the 17th century.

Another calligraphic form invented by the Ottoman scribes, was the *Tughra*, which was the elegant and decorative emblem of an Ottoman Sultan. Every Sultan adopted a *Tughra* bearing his name and serving as his official signature.*Tughras* represented the State as long as the Sultan had political authority. During the reign of Orhan Ghazi (1326-1362) the *Tughra* was a simple design; it became more intricate during the time of Mehmed the Conqueror (1451-1481) and in the era of Süleyman the Magnificent (1520-1566) it reached its perfection in the classical style. It is a special calligraphic composition comprising the name of the Sultan, the name of his father and a prayer for his eternal victory. In the 16th century oversize *Tughras* were prepared to be hung in the Imperial Council, as well as smaller ones which were placed at the top of documents such as *fermans* (imperial edicts), *berats* (royal letters) or *menşurs* (royal patents of rank). Scribes would never put their signature on these documents.

THE TURKISH ART OF CALLIGRAPHY

The Turks played an important role in the development of Islamic calligraphy. After they converted to Islam and started using the Arabic alphabet, they produced several calligraphic works. The examples which have come down to our day belong to the Seljuks of Anatolia. They applied the *kufic* script first in manuscripts, but after the spread of the *aqlam al-sittah* , they used the *kufic* script for book headings and in monumental inscriptions as ornamental floriated, plaited, knotted, interlaced, intertwined and animated *kufic*.

As the Ottomans gained power throughout Anatolia, which culminated with the conquest of Constantinople (Istanbul) in 1453, the Ottoman state flourished both in the political and military fields and became an Empire. During the Empire the Sultans were patrons of the arts and many artists worked under the protection of the Palace. Particularly starting from the reign of Bayezid II (1481-1512) an institution was established of several artistic groups working for the Palace. The

قلم الثلث
بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
الله ولي التوفيق وهو نعم الرفيق
ابن عباس ان احق ما اخذتم عليه اجرا كتاب الله عمران
بن حصين وجابر ان اخالكم قد مات فقوموا فصلوا عليه ابو هريرة
قال رسول المكي والمدني والهاشمي

6- SECTION FROM A CALLIGRAPHIC SCROLL

Prepared by Shaykh Hamdullah to show the different scripts

Early 16th century, 180 x 19.3 cm.

Topkapı Palace Museum, E.H.2086

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
الحمد لله رب العالمين ۝ الرحمن الرحيم ۝
مالك يوم الدين ۝ اياك نعبد واياك
نستعين ۝ اهدنا الصراط المستقيم ۝
صراط الذين انعمت عليهم ۝ غير
المغضوب عليهم ولا الضالين ۝

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
الم ۝ ذلك الكتاب لا ريب فيه هدى
للمتقين ۝ الذين يؤمنون بالغيب ويقيمون
الصلوة ومما رزقناهم ينفقون ۝ والذين
يؤمنون بما انزل اليك وما انزل من قبلك
وبالاخرة هم يوقنون ۝ اولئك على هدى

7- PAGES FROM A *QUR'AN*
WRITTEN ON PAPER IN *NASKHI* SCRIPT
by Shaykh Hamdullah, dated 1499, 33.5 x 22.5 cm.
Topkapı Palace Museum, E.H.71, f.2b-3a

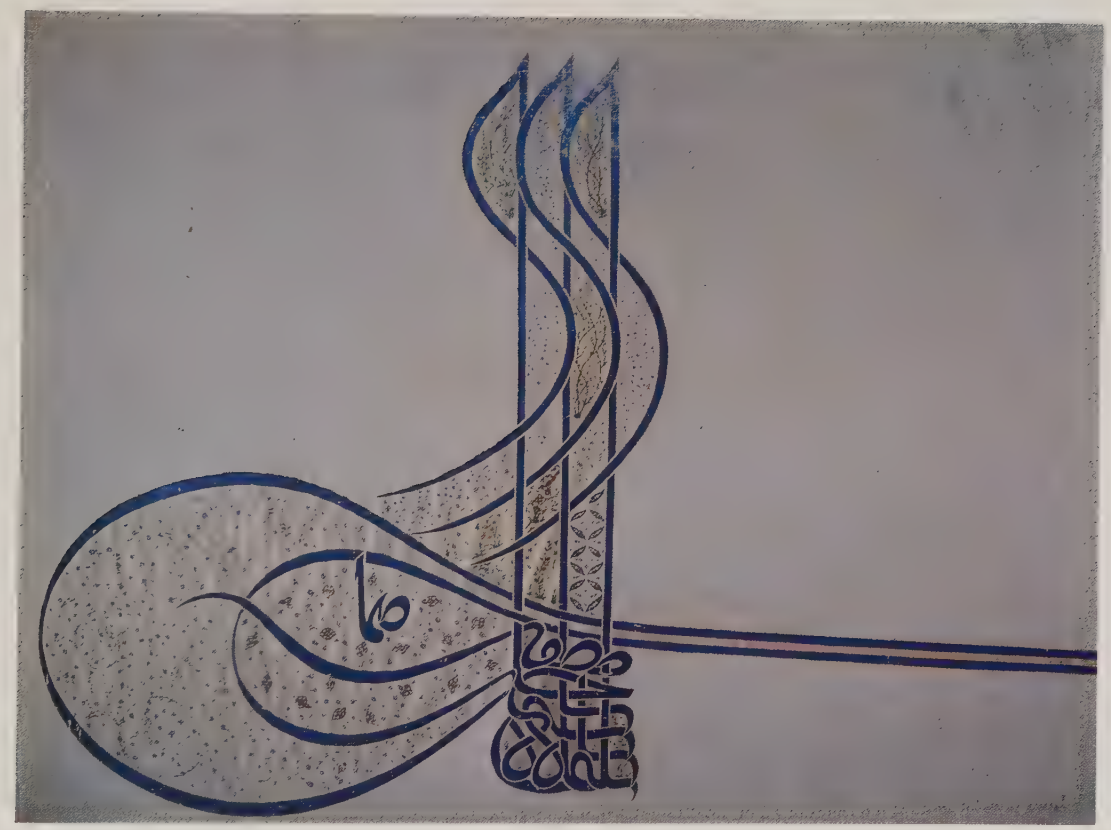
8- *MUTHALTHAL* (UNBROKEN) *BASMALAH*
FROM A *SURAT AL-AN'AM* (*QUR'AN* VI)
Ahmad Karahisari, c. 1540-50, 50 x 34 cm.
Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts Istanbul, no.1443

9

وَأُمُّ الْعِبَادَاتِ وَأُمُّ الْأَمَانِي فَأُمُّ جَمِيعِ الْأَدْوِيَةِ
قِلَّةُ الْأَكْلِ وَأُمُّ الْآدَابِ قِلَّةُ الْكَلَامِ

9- CALLIGRAPHY IN *THULUTH-MUHAQQAQ-NASKHI* SCRIPTS
Ahmad Karahisari, c.1540-1550, 19.5 x 29.2 cm.
Topkapı Palace Museum, G.Y.323/158

10



10-THE *TUGHRA* OF SULTAN SÜLEYMAN THE MAGNIFICENT

c. 1540-1550, 158 x 240 cm.

Topkapı Palace Museum, G. Y.1400

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

عن علي رضي الله عنه كان اذا وصف النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال لم يكن بالطويل الممغط ولا بالقصير المتردد كان ربعة من القوم ولم يكن بالجعد القطط ولا بالسبط كان جعدا رجلا ولم يكن بالمطهم ولا بالمكلثم وكان في وجهه تدوير ابيض مشربا ادعج العينين اهدب الاشفار جليل المشاش والكتد اجرد ذا مسربة شثن الكفين والقدمين اذا مشى يتقلع كانما يمشي في صبب واذا التفت التفت معا بين كتفيه خاتم النبوة وهو خاتم النبيين اجود الناس صدرا واصدقهم لهجة واكرمهم عشيرة والينهم عريكة

وما ارسلناك الا رحمة للعالمين

واكرمهم عشيرة من رآه بديهة هابه ومن خالطه معرفة احبه يقول ناعته لم ار قبله ولا بعده مثله صلى الله عليه وعلى آله وصحبه وسلم كتبه الفقير عثمان المعروف بحافظ القرآن غفر الله له ولوالديه ولمن نظر فيه آمين يا رب العالمين سنة تسع ومائة والف

11- *HILYE* WRITTEN IN *RAYHANI-THULUTH* SCRIPTS

Hafız Uthman

Dated 1698, 42 x 25.5 cm.

Topkapı Palace Museum, G.Y.1430

first great master of Turkish calligraphy, Shaykh Hamdullah of Amasya (1429-1520), lived during this period and throughout his long life he was very prolific, creating countless masterpieces. At the beginning of his career, he worked in the style of Yaqut al-Mustasımı. Later, encouraged by his patron and pupil, Sultan Bayezid II, he assimilated the Yaqut style with his own and formed a new style. The "*Shaykh Style*", created about 1485, was used extensively and for a long period in Turkish calligraphy. The wonderful examples of Shaykh Hamdullah's works, mostly written in *naskhi* script, are kept and displayed in the Topkapı Palace Museum in Istanbul, the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts Istanbul, the Library of Istanbul University, Süleymaniye Library, Beyazıt State Library, Bursa Museum, the Edirne Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts, and in private collections in Turkey and abroad. Also the inscriptions at the Firuz Ağa Mosque, the Davut Paşa Mosque, the Beyazıt Mosque are his creations. In historical sources, it is recorded that besides being a great calligrapher, Shaykh Hamdullah was also a good swimmer and archer. From the 15th century onwards, his works were accepted as ideal examples and all calligraphers tried to use the "*Shaykh Style*". Among the many pupils that he taught, his son Mustafa Dede bin Hamdullah, Shukrullah Halife, his nephew Hamdullah Çelebi and relative Abdullah bin İlyas of Amasya are well known.

The master of Ottoman calligraphy in the 16th century was Ahmad Karahisari (?-1556), known as Karahisari, because he was from Afyonkarahisar. Being the pupil of Asadallah al-Kirmani, he worked in the Palace during the reign of Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent as a scribe, together with many others. He was famous for his use of the scripts *jali thuluth*, *muhaqqaq* and for *muthanna* (mirror writing) and tried to revive the Yaqut style. He created an aesthetic style by not only highlighting the ratio of the letters, but also by harmonizing the calligraphy with the whole page. His *Basmalah* written in *muthalthal* (unbroken) *thuluth* on the frontispiece of the manuscript of *Surat al-An'am* (*Qur'an* VI),assorted *hadith*, prayers and extracts from the *Kasidat al-Burda*, which is preserved in the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts in Istanbul, is very famous. He wrote this *Basmalah* without lifting the pen from the paper and rendered certain letters in a stylized manner. Above and below are squared *kufic* inscriptions written in black and gold ink.

The Topkapı Palace collection owns a wonderful illuminated *Qur'an* written by Ahmad Karahisari in *thuluth-naskhi* script and dated 1546-47 (Y.Y.999). Another *Qur'an* in the collection which does not give a date or the name of the calligrapher, is thought to have been started by Ahmad Karahisari, since the script reveals his characteristic style, and to have been finished later by his pupil and adopted son Hasan Çelebi. Having very striking illuminations, this large-sized *Qur'an* is accepted as a masterpiece of Ottoman calligraphy (H.S.5). Ahmad Karahisari also wrote the *jali* inscriptions on impressive monuments of the period such as Süleymaniye Mosque, and was a creative master.

Another very famous Ottoman calligrapher was Hafız Uthman (1642-1698), who created an individual school specializing in the *naskhi* script and influenced a return to the "*Shaykh Style*" once more in the art of Turkish calligraphy. The *Qur'ans* he wrote, became examples used for printed *Qur'ans* in the 19th century. Being the first calligrapher to write the *Hilye*, he has a special place in the art of Turkish calligraphy. He was also a teacher of Sultan Ahmed III (1703-1730) when the latter was a young prince.

From the 17th century onwards albums (*murakka*) containing samples of beautiful calligraphy increased in number. We observe that artists applying the *aqlam al-sittah* scripts began to create calligraphic paintings. The *jali thuluth* album of Mehmed Hocazade dated 1689-90 and the calligraphic painting in the shape of a ship consisting of the names of the Seven Sleepers from the *Qur'an* (XVIII:8) known as *Ashabülkehf* and signed by İsmail Derdi (dated 1690), are only two of the many samples of this kind. The tradition of calligraphic paintings continued in the next centuries. The *Basmalah* and *Bihi* written in *thuluth* by İsmail Zühdi (?-1806) , outlined in gold and rendered in the shape of a stork, is very well known. At the upper right corner of this calligraphic painting there is a view of the Kaaba enclosed by a cartouche, while sprays of flowers appear around the stork. The stork had religious connotations among the populace and was thought to have visited mosques en route to the pilgrimage and to have stopped at the Kaaba on the way back. This belief is clearly represented in the calligraphic painting of İsmail Zühdi, who taught calligraphy in the Palace School during the reign of Mustafa III (1757-1774) and was

أنزلوا الناس على قدر عقولهم
خلقت الدنيا عندهم فما يجددونها وخربت بيوتهم فما
يعمرونها وماتت في صدورهم فما يحيونها بل يهدمونها
فيبنون بها آخرتهم ويبيعونها فيشترون بها ما يبقى لهم
ونظروا إلى أهلها صرعى قد خلت بهم المثلات فما يرون إلا أمانيا

12- ALBUM PAGE WITH A CALLIGRAPHY
IN *THULUTH-NASKHI* SCRIPTS
Hafız Uthman
17th century, 20 x 26.5 cm.
Topkapı Palace Museum, E.H.2209

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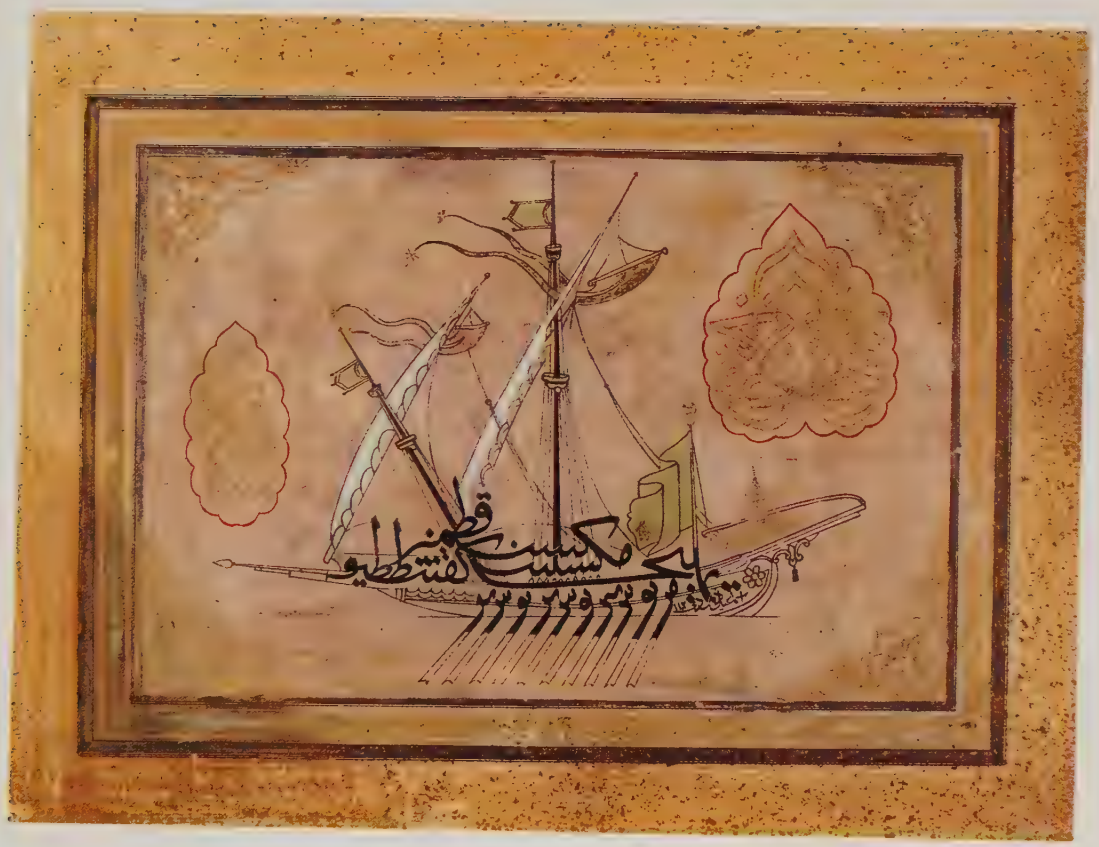
13-A *QUR'AN* VERSE (III/172)
WRITTEN IN *JALI THULUTH* SCRIPT
Mehmed Hocazade
Dated 1689-90, 29 x 56 cm.
Topkapı Palace Museum, M.R.1123

14



14- CALLIGRAPHIC PAINTING IN *THULUTH* SCRIPT

Ismail Derdi

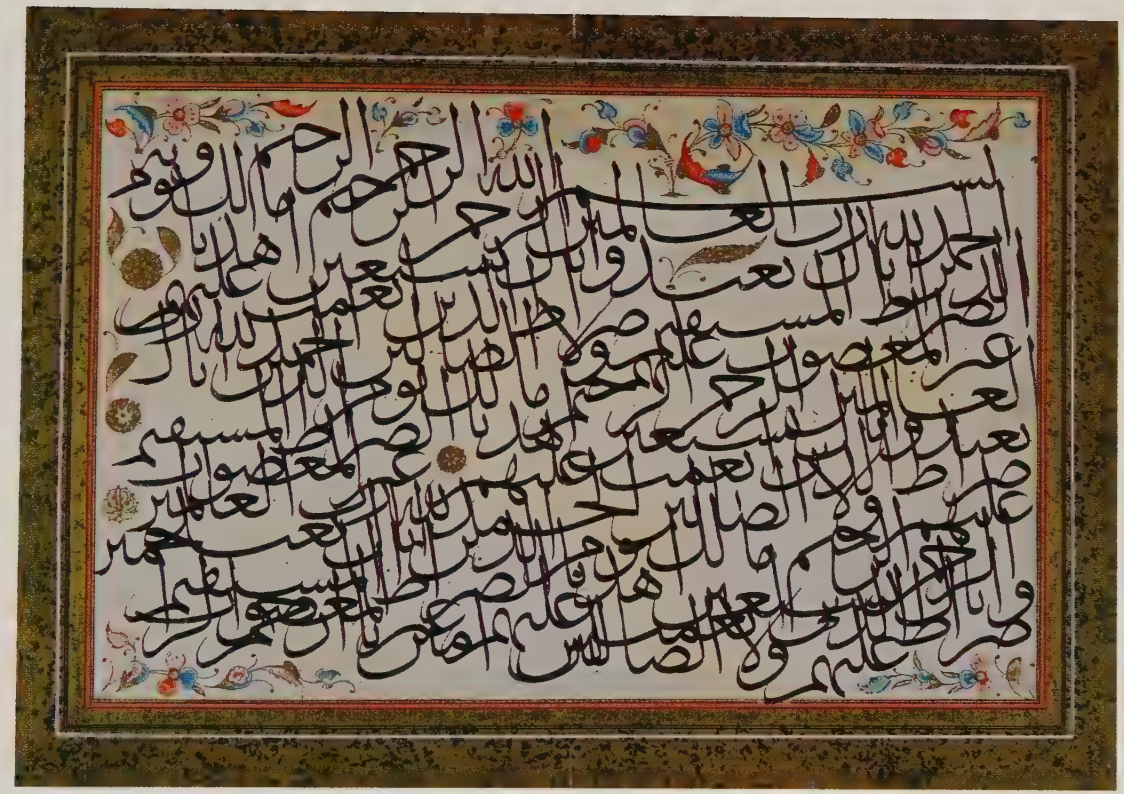
Dated 1690, 19 x 28 cm.

Topkapı Palace Museum, G.Y.325/66

وقار
عليه وسلامه نعم الشفيع
القرآن
القرآن شافع مشفع
وما يحل مصدق

15-CALLIGRAPHIES OF SULTAN AHMED III
IN *JALI MUHAQQAQ* SCRIPT
Dated 1723-24, 28 x 46.4 cm.
Topkapı Palace Museum, A.3652

16



16-CALLIGRAPHIC EXERCISES
IN *THULUTH* AND *NASKHI* SCRIPTS
From an album signed by Mehmed Rasim
Dated 1750, 29 x 21.5 cm.
Topkapı Palace Museum, H.2257

اسمعیل
زهدی
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17-CALLIGRAPHIC PAINTING IN *THULUTH* SCRIPT

Ismail Zühdî

Late 18th century, 28 x 19.5 cm.

Topkapı Palace Museum, G.Y.314/40

renowned for his *thuluth* and *naskhi* styles. His most celebrated student was his brother Mustafa Rakım.

Yesari Mehmed Esad (?-1798), a calligrapher who worked at the end of the 18th century, was the founder of a new style of *jali ta'liq*, which was developed further under his son, Yesarizade Mustafa İzzet, and became a distinctive school that has survived to the present.

Another famous and talented Turkish calligrapher of the early 19th century was Mustafa Rakım (1757-1826). He was known for his *jali thuluth* style as well as for renditions of *Tughras*. He also was the founder of a new school of calligraphy. The *Tughra* of Mahmud II preserved in the Topkapı Palace Museum collection and drawn by Mustafa Rakım is a unique example of calligraphy.This *Tughra* rendered in black on cream-coloured paper, is composed with a smaller but identical version at the upper right, together with the word "*Adlî*", Mahmud II's honorific name, enclosed by an illuminated medallion. The date and signature of the artist written in several registers of *thuluth* is placed in a pear-shaped cartouche at the lower left. This work is illuminated in the style of the 19th century.

Mahmud Celaleddin (?-1829) who lived in the same era as Mustafa Rakım, also created his own style, being under the influence of Hafız Uthman in his *thuluth* and *naskhi* works.

The 19th century was the period of large calligraphic panels. One of the panel calligraphers was Mehmed Şevki Efendi (1829-87), who founded a new school of calligraphy based on his individualistic style. In addition to his official duties, this prolific artist taught calligraphy to the sons of Abdülhamid II (1876-1909). Another famous scribe from this era was Kadıasker Mustafa İzzet (1801-1876). He was first trained in the Palace School, then attended *Galata Saray* . He was also a *ney* (a musical instrument) player and composer, and served as the *Rumeli Kadıaskeri* (chief military judge of Rumelia). He produced a vast amount of calligraphic studies, including over two hundred *Hilye* panels.

Among the Turkish calligraphic artists who produced works of art up until the early 20th century, Sami Efendi (1838-1912) has a special place. His panels in *jali thuluth* are accepted as being among the most successful renditions of a particular style of calligraphy. He is also well

known as a master of the *jali ta'liq* style. Hasan Rıza Efendi (1849-1920) is considered an unforgettable artist of *Qur'an* writing in *naskhi* script. Kamil Akdik (1861-1941) who was taught by Sami Efendi was the last master of the *thuluth-naskhi* style. Hulusi Yazgan (1869-1940) and Necmeddin Okyay (1883-1976), both pupils of Sami Efendi have produced very beautiful and developed examples of the *jali ta'liq* style.

Turkish calligraphy as an art is still continuing in our day, and modern artists are trying to keep this traditional art alive.

OTTOMAN SULTANS AS CALLIGRAPHERS

Calligraphy is an art in which some of the Ottoman Sultans also showed interest. Among those whose art works have come down to our day, the most well known are Sultan Ahmed III (1703-1730), Sultan Mahmud II (1808-1839), Sultan Abdülmecid (1839-1861) and Sultan Abdülaziz (1861-1876).

Sultan Ahmed III was a master calligrapher and very successful in *Tughra* compositions with *jali thuluth* script. He also prepared album pages in the *jali muhaqqaq* script. When he was a prince,he took lessons from Hafız Uthman in the Palace and was educated under the influence of the "*Shaykh Style*". All his works kept in the collection of the Topkapı Palace Museum bear his signature.

Sultan Mahmud II was also a talented calligrapher. While he was still the heir to the throne, he received his diploma (*icazet*) from his tutor Kebecizade Mehmed Vasfi, and later studied *jali thuluth* with Mustafa Rakım, creating many works of art of great beauty and skill.

Sultan Abdülmecid, who produced calligraphic works signed by himself, and Sultan Abdülaziz, whose works of art date from the period when he was still a prince, also exhibited in the collection of the Topkapı Palace Museum, were both very talented Ottoman Sultans who created various panels.

18

18-CALLIGRAPHIC PANEL

WRITTEN IN *JALI THULUTH* SCRIPT

Mustafa Rakım

Dated 1797, 39.7 x 32.5 cm.

Topkapı Palace Museum, G.Y.324/12

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
وما توفيقي الا بالله

19-*JALI THULUTH* CALLIGRAPHIES

Sultan Mahmud II

Early 19th century, 53 x 66 cm.

Topkapı Palace Museum, G.Y.906

20

لی خمسة اطفی بها
حر الوباء الحاطمة
المصطفی والمرتضی
وابناهما والفاطمة

20-CALLIGRAPHY IN *TA'LIQ* SCRIPT

Yesarizade Mustafa İzzed

Dated 1825, 51 x 31.5 cm.

Topkapı Palace Museum, G.Y.1278

21

21-THE *TUGHRA* OF SULTAN MAHMUD II

Mustafa Rakım

Dated 1808-9, 28 x 34 cm.

Topkapı Palace Museum, G.Y.825

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
وما ارسلناك الا رحمة للعالمين

22-*HILYE*

Kadıasker Mustafa İzzed

19th century, 65 x 52 cm.

Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts Istanbul, no.4407

23

23-*JALI THULUTH* CALLIGRAPHY
(*KELIME-I TEVHID*)
Sultan Abdülmecid
Dated 1851, 33.5 x 72 cm.
Topkapı Palace Museum, H.2280/13

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ISBN 975-96278-0-9